

# **ANALYZING STUDENTS' GRAMMATICAL ERRORS IN WRITING NARRATIVE TEXT AT SECOND SEMESTER STUDENTS OF UNISMA**

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**Abstract:** This study aimed to find out the types of grammatical errors made by the second semester students of UNISMA in writing narrative text, to describe the most common grammatical error made by the second semester students of UNISMA in writing narrative text and to find out the causes of grammatical errors produced by the second semester students in their narrative text. This study employed descriptive qualitative. The population of the study was second semester students of English Education Department of Teacher Training and Education Faculty of University of Islam Malang in academic year 2020/2021. The researcher chose ten papers of students' personal narrative. The findings showed that the second semester students made errors in all types of surface strategy taxonomy namely omission (20 or 20.8%), additions (16 or 16.6%), misformation (56 or 58.3%) and misordering (4 or 4.16). The most common grammatical error made by the students was misformation with 56 or 58.3% errors and the causes of students' grammatical errors were interlingual and intralingual transfer. Hence it could be concluded that the students' understanding towards English grammar was still low, they found difficult to construct a sentence with the proper form of morpheme and structure, and they were still influenced by their mother tongue and had lack of knowledge about the target language.

**Key words:** Analyzing, Grammatical Errors, Writing Narrative Text.

## INTRODUCTION

Grammar refers to the whole system and structure of the English language that includes the structure of words which cannot be avoided by language learners. According to Brown (2001) “the grammatical competence plays a dominant location as a main element of communicative competence”. It means that grammar is one of the main key to make students’ writing more communicative and understandable.

In fact, making errors in language learning process is a natural thing and hard to be hindered by language learners. Mastering English grammar is not easy for the learners. They frequently made errors on their writing which related to grammar due to the difference rule between their mother tongue and English. Meanwhile, the students are hoped to make a good product of writing that needs a good master in grammar. By using appropriate grammar, their writing will be more understandable and easy to read. So, grammar is such an important component in writing skill.

In English learning, there are several different types of text that have to be learned by students, one of which is narrative text. A narrative text is a story that has complications or problematic situations and attempts to resolve them. The goal of this text is amusing or entertaining the readers. According to Anderson (1997), entertaining the readers is the aim of narrative text. So, it can be said that Narrative text is a text that tells about the events that happen in the past which have problems and solution at the same time.

Maybe it sounds odd when someone focuses on the errors than the correctness of students’ writing but it shares some positive effects for both teachers and the students. Khansir delivered that “Error analysis is a language sort analysis that prioritize on the errors learners produce (2012). Hopefully by knowing the students’ error, the lecturers could improve the method and the way they teach in order to help students produce a great writing and avoid the same errors like before. It is in line with what Ellis (1997), error analysis can take a role in determining learners’ learning

problems at any stage seen from their errors and the learners will learn from their errors.

According to Surface Strategy Taxonomy which was delivered by Dulay et, al., (1982), there are four types of errors such as omission, additions, misformation and misordering. Firstly, omission errors are characterized by the absence of an item that must appear in a well-formed utterance. Next, additions are distinguished by the existence of an item that shouldn't be present in a well-formed utterance. Double markings, regularizations, and simple additions are the types of addition errors. Furthermore, misformation means the usage of the incorrect form of the morpheme or structure. While omission occurs when the learner does not supply the item at all, misformation errors occur when the learner provides inaccurate thing. Three types of misformation are regularizations, archi-forms and alternating forms. In sum up, misordering errors are the erroneous location of a morpheme or collection of morphemes in a speech.

Besides, the researcher used Brown's theory to analyze the causes of students' grammatical errors in their writings. According to Brown (2000), the common causes of errors in writing are interlingual and intralingual transfer. The first is interlingual transfer. Interlingual transfer occurs when learners are still affected by their first language in the process of learning a second language. It is in line with what Richards (1974) stated that interlingual is the errors which made by the language learners because of mother tongue affect. Besides, Ellis (1997) stated that L1 is one of the error sources. She also said that negative transfer is when the students' error because of their L1 while positive transfer is when the students construct right sentences because of their L1.

Additionally, Intralingual transfer happens overgeneralized the information from the target language in every structure of language that they found. Richard (1974: 6) stated that intralingual interference refers to things produced by learner which are not indicative of the learner's mother tongue structure, but rather the result of insufficient exposure to the target language. He also added that four categories of the

classification of intralingual errors too. They are overgeneralization, ignorance of rule restrictions, incomplete application of the rules, and false concept hypothesized or semantic errors.

Several previous studies like Rahmanu (2019) and Murdiyana (2019) have done a research on error analysis in students' narrative text. Rahmanu (2019) found that 50% sample of narrative text contained errors on past sentences, present perfect, simple past, be, preposition plural-singular, modal, gerund, to infinitive, passive voice and subject pronouns. Another recent research was done by Murdiyana (2019) and the result of her study were 621 grammatical errors with verb errors being the most common, followed by pronoun errors, adjective errors, preposition errors, noun errors, conjunction and adverb errors.

Therefore, the researcher finally wanted to conduct a research to find out the types of grammatical errors, the most common grammatical error and the causes of students' grammatical errors in their narrative text produced by the second semester students of University of Islam Malang.

## **METHOD**

### **Research Design**

This research employed qualitative approach. Qualitative approach used by the researcher since the objective of this study were to find out the types of grammatical error students performed in their narrative text, the most common of grammatical error made by the students and the causes of students' grammatical errors which presented in words form. Qualitative research is examining and comprehending the meaning that individuals or groups give to a social or human (Cresswell, 2009).

### **Subject of the study**

The population of this study was the second semester students of English Education Department of Teacher Training and Education Faculty of University of Islam Malang in academic year 2020/2021. The researcher chose ten papers of students' personal narrative as the sample of her research. The procedures of data

collection were the researcher gained the faculty approval, consulted the lecturer to get the research permission in the class. After gaining permission, the researcher asked the students to create personal narrative approximately 2-3 paragraphs and then submitted their papers in MS or PDF form via personal chat to the researcher.

To analyze the grammatical errors, the researcher used the error analysis procedures proposed by (Ellis, 1997). Firstly, the researcher identified the error students made in their writings. After identifying the errors, the researcher used Grammarly App to check and checked by herself manually to make sure that the researcher's analysis and correction were correct. In classifying the grammatical errors made by the students, the researcher used Surface Strategy Taxonomy by Dulay, Burt and Krashen. Furthermore the researcher calculated the frequency and percentages of students' grammatical errors using Sugiyono's formula (2015). Lastly, the researcher explained the causes of students' grammatical errors. The following formula was applied to verify the frequency of the grammatical errors in the students' narrative text.

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100 \%$$

P: Number of Percentages

F: Frequency of kind of grammatical error

N: Number of whole errors

(Sugiyono, 2015)

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

The following are the findings obtained by the researcher in the students' narrative text. After collecting the data from the students, the researcher analyzed, underlined and identified the students' sentences.

**Table 4.1 The Types of Grammatical Errors Made by the Students**

Surface Strategy Taxonomy	Percentage
Omission	20.8%
Additions	16.6%
Misformation	58.3%
Misordering	4.16%

It could be seen that, the first finding was the second semester students of UNISMA fulfilled all types of errors based on surface strategy taxonomy such as omission, additions, misformation and misordering.

**Table 4.2 The Percentages of Students' Grammatical Errors**

Surface Strategy Taxonomy	Frequency	Percentage
Omission	20	20.8%
Additions	16	16.6%
Misformation	56	58.3%
Misordering	4	4.16%
Total	96	100%

The table showed that the top percentage was misformation namely 56 or 58.3%. The finding indicated that the most often grammatical errors made by the second semester students of UNISMA in their narrative text were misformation errors. After identifying and numbering the percentage of each error. There were two major sources causing the students' grammatical errors, they were interlingual transfer and intralingual transfer.

After analyzing the students' personal narrative, finally the researcher found that the students produced all types of errors namely omission, additions,

misformation and misordering. It is line with the finding that was found by Sinaga & Rahmadani (2020) since they also found that the students made errors in all types of error namely omission, additions, misformation and misordering. Another finding was conducted by Riska (2019), she found that the students made all types of errors based on surface strategy taxonomy like omission, additions, misformation and misordering.

The first type of error made by the second semester students of UNISMA was error of Omission. An Omission is a type of error that is signed by the absence of an item that must exist in a well-formed utterance. The students did not know that there were some components or certain words that must appear in their utterances. There were 20 or 20.8% errors of omission made by the students in their narrative text. They are omission of subject-verb agreement, omission of article, omission of auxiliary verb, omission of singular noun, omission of preposition and omission of conjunction.

*Data 1: In the zoo, I **can** see the tiger, \_ elephant, \_lion and etc.*

It could be seen that, the student omitted article the before those nouns.so, the following is the correction.

*Correction 1: In the zoo, I **could** see the tiger, the elephant, the lion etc.*

The second error kind was error of additions. They are characterized by the presence of an item which must not exist in a well-formed utterance. There were 16 items or 16.6% which were indicated as the errors of addition. They were simple addition, addition of article, addition of verb and auxiliary verb and addition of conjunction.

*Data 2: When I **woke up sleep** on Saturday morning, I directly looked the calendar and that day was IPPNU Makesta in Karanganyar.*

The researcher found that there were two verbs in the students' sentence. It was indicated by the presence of the verb "sleep" after the verb "woke up". It was categorized as the error of addition. The word sleep must be omitted because the verb

“woke up” was suitable to deliver the students’ intention. So, the researcher proposed the following correction:

*Correction 2: When I **woke up** on Saturday morning, I directly looked the calendar and that day was IPPNU Makesta in Karanganyar.*

The errors might be happened because many students directly translated the words from their first language to the target language. Basically, making error was the normal thing in the process of new language learning.

Furthermore, the next type of error done by the students was error of misformation. Misformation is the type of error that characterized by the use of the wrong form of the morpheme or structure. There were 56 or 58.3% items which were indicated as the error of misformation. They were misformation of verb and auxiliary, misformation of pronoun and misformation of conjunction.

*Data 3: I served my fried rice on a large plate and I **add** a fried egg and some chips to make it beautiful.*

It can be seen that the students did not change the verb add into the past form. It might be happened because the students did not know yet or a lack of vocabulary about the target language. So, the following was the correction:

*Correction 3: I served my fried rice on a large plate and I **added** a fried egg and some chips to make it beautiful.*

Lastly, the error made by the students was error of misordering. Misordering error is marked by the inappropriate placement of a morpheme or a bunch of morphemes. The researcher found 4 items or 4.16% misordering errors in students’ narrative text writing. It meant that, the students still got difficulty in constructing ng the sentence in the target language.

*Data 4: The teacher **command to be careful us**.*

Based on the above sentence, it was clear that the students made incorrect replacement or misordering error and misformation of verb because it served as the sentence's object, the personal pronoun *us* must come after the verb *command*.

Therefore, the researcher proposed the following correction:



*Correction 4: The teacher **commanded us to be careful.***

Based on the second finding, the most common errors made by the students were misinformation errors with 56 or 58.3% the number of errors. Most of the students made errors in the verb tense. It might be happened due to lack of understanding towards target language and also influenced by their first language because In Indonesian, there was no change of verb based on the change of the time whereas in English, every verb would change based on the tense.

The researcher discovered that the causes of students' grammatical errors were interlingual and intralingual transfer. It is line with what Ellis (1997) stated that L1 is one of the error sources; it can be positive transfer or negative transfer. It can be said that the students tend to transfer mother tongue's rule to the target language. Richards (1974) stated that interlingual rises when language learners make some faults in the target language because of their mother tongue. While, Intralingual transfer happens when the students overgeneralized the information from the target language in every structure of language that they found. According to Richard (1974: 6) stated that intralingual interference when the learner produced an item due to the generalization based on their incomplete understanding of the target language. It is supported by Intralingual transfer occurred due to the students' simplification, lack of grammar rules knowledge and overgeneralization of rules (Murdiyana, 2019). So, it can be said when the students used their previous experience to overgeneralize the target language structure or phrase is called intralingual transfer.

The first cause of students' grammatical errors in their narrative text was interlingual transfer. Richards (1974) stated that interlingual rises when language learners make some faults in the target language because of their mother tongue. It is in accordance to pointed by Krashen (1982) that the first language has an effect on second language errors. Those errors happened because the students tended to translate their sentences word by word from their first language into the target language. It could be seen from the sentence *when I woke up sleep on Saturday morning*. In this sentence, the student put the verb sleep after the verb woke up

besides the verb woke up was able to deliver the student's intention. This error happened because of the students' first language interference. Interlingual transfer occurred when learners are still swayed by their first language in second language learning process.

In the same way, Some students made some error of intralingual transfer because they overgeneralized and also false concept hypothesized the rule of the target language they were learning and their mastery towards the target language were still low. It could be seen in the students' sentence *after I sited in the bus, a few moment later the bus left my house.* It could be seen that the students overgeneralize the addition of ed in that verb.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**

After identifying, calculating, analyzing and concluding the grammatical errors committed by the second semester students of the English Department of Teacher Training and Education Faculty of University of Islam Malang, the researcher concluded some point. First, the students' understanding towards English grammar was still low because the findings showed that the students fulfilled all types of grammatical errors such as omission, additions, misformation and misordering. It is in line with a study conducted by Jamaliah et. al., (2020) revealed that the students made all categories of errors such as omission, additions, misformation and misordering.

Secondly, most common error type of grammatical errors in the students' narrative text was misformation. It is in line with a study was done by Sutomo (2017) said that the most frequent errors using past verb in writing narrative made by the simple past-misinformation is 80.82 %. It could be concluded that the students still find complicated using the correct form of morpheme or the structure in constructing a sentence. In sum up, the causes of students' grammatical errors were interlingual and intralingual transfer. It was implied that the students were still influenced by their

mother tongue and the students still had a lack of knowledge about the target language.

The first suggestion was for the students, they should be more aware about the structure or the rule of the target language they were learning and they should increase their understanding by reading a lot and practicing what they have known. For the lecturers, they should look for a suitable technique in their teaching to improve the students understanding of English grammar and also motivate the students to read English writings a lot in order to be familiar toward English rules etc. Lastly, The researcher hoped that this research can be a reference for the future researchers in doing their research and the suggestion for them, They should focus on the solutions of the causes of students grammatical errors and analyze the other objects besides text, for example the students' video project, poems etc. Another suggestion is the future researcher should do interview section to analyze the causes of students' grammatical errors.

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